

## Message Text

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ORIGIN PA-02

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT EDITORIAL WASHINGTON POST MONDAY,  
DECEMBER 12 HEADED "A SEPARATE PEACE?"

2. THE DIPLOMACY OF THE MIDEAST HAS TURNED NOT ONLY A  
HOPEFUL CORNER BUT AN IRONIC ONE. NO SOONER HAD PRESI-  
DENT ANWAR SADAT OF EGYPT MADE PEACE SEEM POSSIBLE FOR  
THE FIRST TIME IN 30 YEARS THAN THE PARTIES AND OUTSIDE  
POWERS BEGAN INSISTING THAT PEACE BETWEEN EGYPT AND  
ISRAEL ALONE WOULD BE A MISTAKE. CAIRO AND JERUSALEM ARE  
NOW OUTDOING EACH OTHER IN PROFESSIONS OF DESIRE FOR A  
COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT-THOUGH NO OTHER ARAB COUNTRY  
HAS YET PUBLICLY JOINED THE PROCESS AND ISRAEL HAS YET  
TO COMPLETE THE POLICY REVIEW THAT ALONE WOULD MAKE ITS  
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PROFESSIONS CREDIBLE. THE UNITED STATES DEMONSTRATIVELY  
AGREES THAT THE CONFERENCE OPENING IN CAIRO ON WEDNESDAY  
SHOULD TRY NOT TO MAKE A SEPARATE DEAL BUT TO MOVE TOWARD  
AN OVERALL ACCORD.

3. TWO THINGS NEED TO BE SAID. THE FIRST IS THAT,  
STRATEGICALLY SPEAKING, IT WOULD BE IRRESPONSIBLE TO

SHOOT FOR A SEPARATE PEACE. THE VERY EFFORT WOULD STRENGTHEN THOSE ARAB ELEMENTS, INSIDE AS WELL AS OUTSIDE EGYPT, DETERMINED TO BRING DOWN PRESIDENT SADAT. HE WOULD RISK ALIENATION OF THE LOYALTIES AND SUBSIDIES OF THE SAUDIS, WHOSE COOPERATION IN OIL AND MONEY HAPPENS TO BE VITAL TO THE UNITED STATES. THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM WOULD FESTER. THE RISK WOULD INCREASE THAT ARAB "REJECTIONISTS" WOULD USE, AND BE USED BY, A SOVIET UNION ANGERED BY EXCLUSION FROM A LEADING MIDEAST ROLE.

4. BUT, TACTICALLY SPEAKING, IT WOULD BE FOOLISH AND SELF-DENYING NOT TO LEAVE OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF A SEPARATE PEACE. IT IS PRECISELY THE PROSPECT OF BEING FROZEN OUT THAT IS MOST LIKELY TO DRAW INTO THE PEACE PROCESS THE PARTIES NOW OUTSIDE IT. SYRIA'S PRESIDENT, IN HIS CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SAUDIS AND OTHER ARABS, IS ALMOST CERTAINLY CANVASSING THE TERMS ON WHICH HE MIGHT COME IN FROM THE COLD. IF ANYTHING WILL INDUCE THE PLO TO RETHINK ITS REJECTIONISM, IT IS THE SPECTACLE OF WEST BANK-GAZA PALESTINIANS RESPONDING TO THE HAND OFFERED THEM BY ISRAEL AND EGYPT. THE RUSSIANS MUST FIGURE THAT AN ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN DEAL, BROADENED AS IT MIGHT BE TO INCLUDE A SAUDI-BACKED JORDANIAN-WEST BANK COMBINATION, WOULD LEAVE MOSCOW WAY OUT IN LEFT FIELD WITH THE LOSERS OF SYRIA AND THE PLO. MR. SADAT HAS ENABLED THE UNITED STATES TO SOLICIT MODERATION IN MOS-

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COW AND DAMASCUS KNOWING (AND KNOWING THAT THEY KNOW) THAT THEIR COOPERATION IS USEFUL--ESPECIALLY TO THEM-- BUT NOT ESSENTIAL TO THE PROJECT AT HAND.

5. TO PURSUE A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE EVEN WHILE LEAVING OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF A LIMITED DEAL TAKES SOME DIPLOMATIC DOING. THIS APPEARS TO BE THE COMMON POLICY OF EGYPT, ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES. IT PROVIDES A BASIS FOR HOPE THAT THE CAIRO CONFERENCE, WHICH ONLY EGYPT AND ISRAEL AMONG THE PARTIES WILL ATTEND BUT WHICH WILL BE OPEN-ENDED IN TIME, AGENDA AND PARTICIPATION, WILL KEEP UP THE MOMENTUM THAT MR. SADAT BEGAN.

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